THE DEATH OF STALIN

VOLUME 2

A TRUE STORY... SOVIET.

NURY ★ ROBIN

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THE DEATH OF STALIN

VOLUME 2

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LORIEN AUREYRE COLORS

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TRANSLATION: TANIM
RETEXT: THOMAS

Lubyanka Prison, 6 March 1953.

Polina Molotovna ...
You died on 23 of last October. I wrote this to Stalin, the date of your execution order.
It is only thanks to me: Lavrenti Pavlovich Beria, that you can still see the sun rise in your cell walls.
What would you do if I freed you?
If I let you see your husband. If I returned to you your life, would you be willing to pay me back?

To Stalin!
To Stalin!
I cannot believe that he is no longer here...
None of us regarded him as mortal. He was a god, mysterious and all-powerful.
We did not even dare to think of what we would do when he was gone ... we are poorer, without him.
He was a part of us.
The love you held for him, I admire you for that, Viasseslav. He demanded a lot of sacrifices, though.
When Stalin took my wife, I let myself go. I fell into bourgeois sentimentality ...
Stalin helped me avoid this.
The things he had to do, that is the tragedy! If he seemed ruthless, it is simply because he followed things to their logical conclusion.
Even when he made some mistakes, he accepted them.
That is true. He never wavered.
And we must not falter. It is for us to take the helm.

I'm glad I could talk to you. We always shared the same ideals, and I know I can count on you.
I'll see you tomorrow. At the meeting of the Committee.
Do not forget!
Everything Beria gives ...
...Beria can take away.
Enter. Make yourself at home.

Viasseslav?

Viasseslav ...

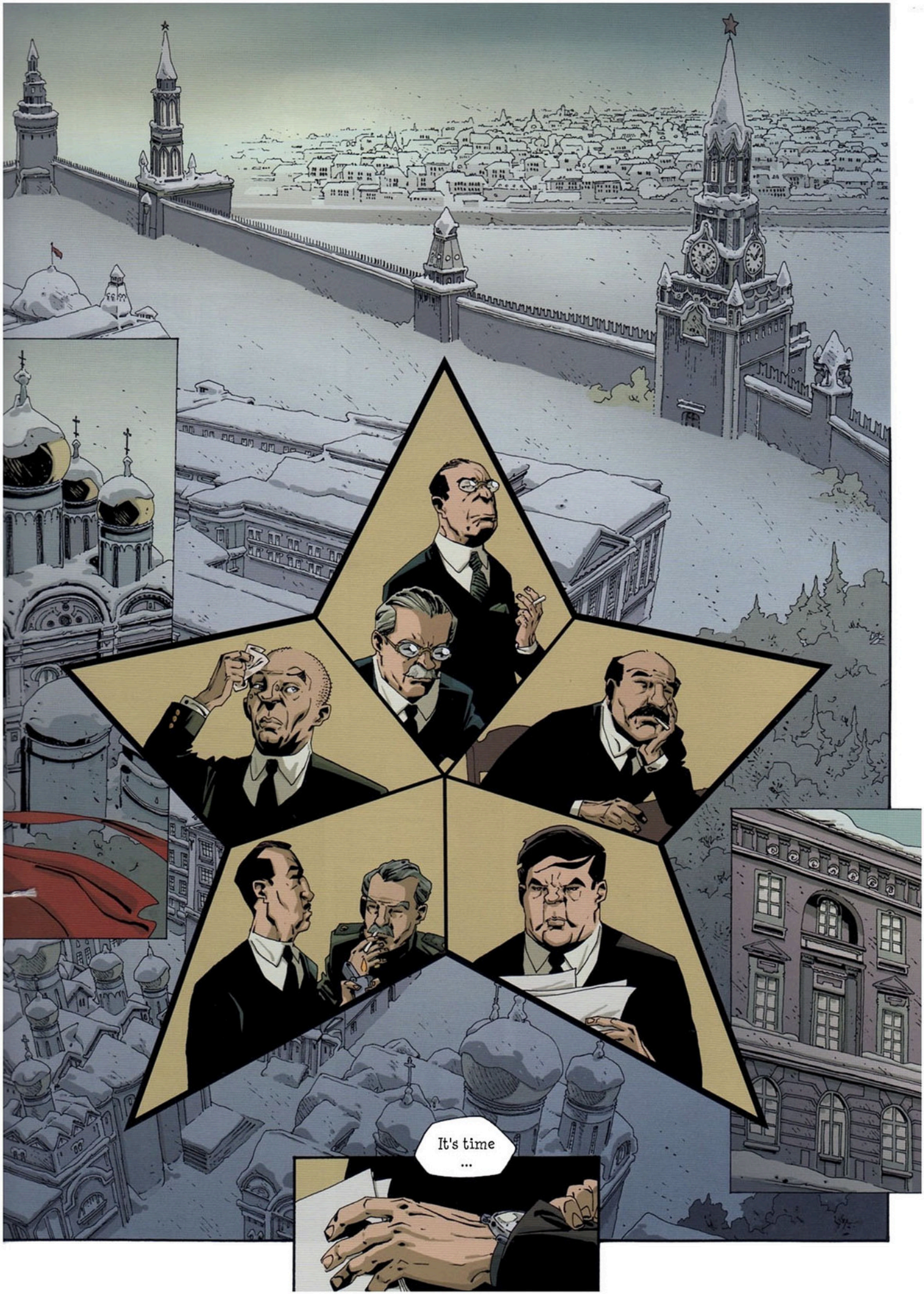
It's me.

No ... no.
Not you.
You are dead!

I am alive, my love.
I am here.

No...
Noooo!

Noooo!


It's time
...

We can begin.

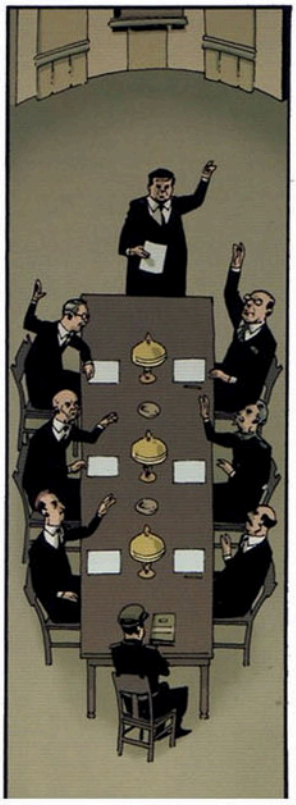
First we must thank Marshal Zhukov for being here with us ...

...the Marshal is the official representative of the army during this special meeting.

The agenda concerns the new distribution of ministerial portfolios following the death of our dear friend, Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin.

I propose, in accordance with the wishes Stalin issued during the last Congress, that our comrade Georgi Malenkov Maximilianovitch be appointed Chairman of the Council of Ministers.
Thanks, I also propose that Lavrenti Pavlovich Beria be appointed Senior Vice President.

Nobody has anything to add?
Let's vote. Those for the proposal raise their hands.



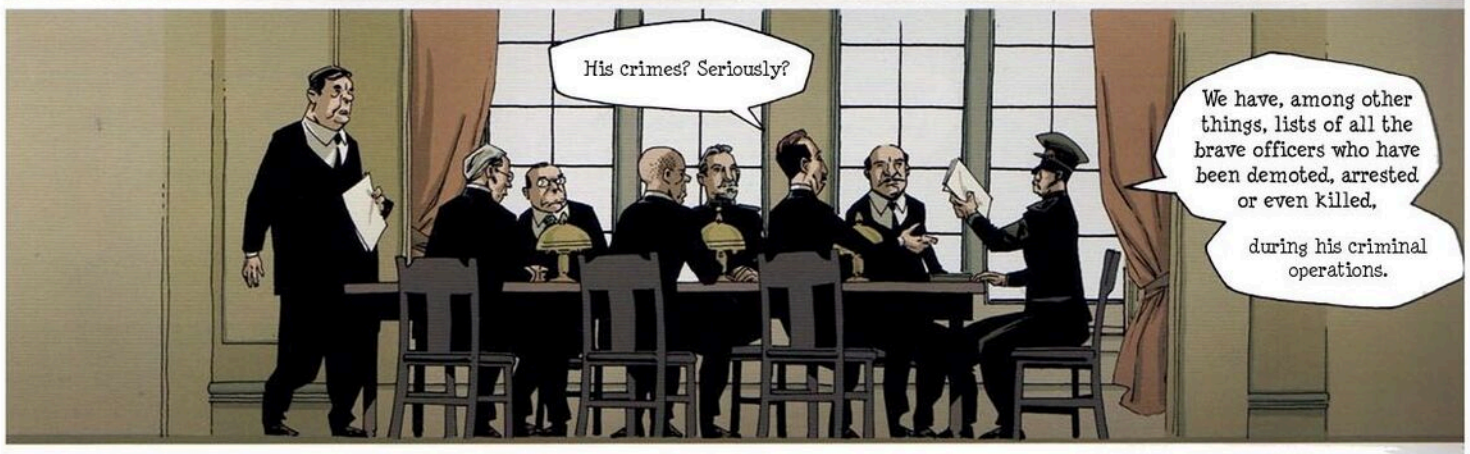
The vote is unanimous, the proposal accepted.

Since Malenkov was appointed as Chairman of the Council of Ministers, I propose that he gives the Secretary Generalship to our comrade Nikita Khrushchev.
It's an excellent idea ... alas, it is contrary to the decisions of the Congress and so contrary to the wishes of Stalin.
I'm still for it.
Once he heads the party, our friend Nikita could try to revamp the Council of Ministers ...
I've never said anything like that.
You have not said this nor did you write this. But you have thought so hard about this, that I heard you.
Vote.
Those for the proposal raise their hands.
Vaisseslav? You ...
Silence, Comrade Khrushchev. We do not talk during the vote.

That those who are against the proposal raise their hands.
Three for, four against.
The proposal is rejected.
Marshal Zhukov wishes to speak.
The Marshal is not a member of the Committee. He cannot vote.
Let's hear the following proposal.
I propose to merge the Ministries of Interior and State Security ...
...and appoint Lavrenti Pavlovitch Beria, who, already Interior Minister, to head the new department.
Those for the proposal raise their hands.
A unanimous vote, proposal is accepted.

I propose that Marshal Zhukov, present here, is nominated as the Minister of Defence, to replace our comrade Nikolai Bulganin.
What? Why?
You're not angry, Nikolai?
Absolutely not, I think this is a healthy idea.
Our people need to overcome the grief that overwhelms them. The Marshal is extremely popular and rightly so. As the winner of the battles of Stalingrad and Berlin ...
The winner was Stalin!
We are here to continue his work, not to destroy him by planting pinnacles on an imaginary Napoleon.
I just think that ...
You should be ashamed! Give up your job, right now ... where is your honour?
Marshal Zhukov, is there a comment on this latest proposal?
I absolutely do not want to enter the cabinet.
So much the better! It will save us a wasted vote!

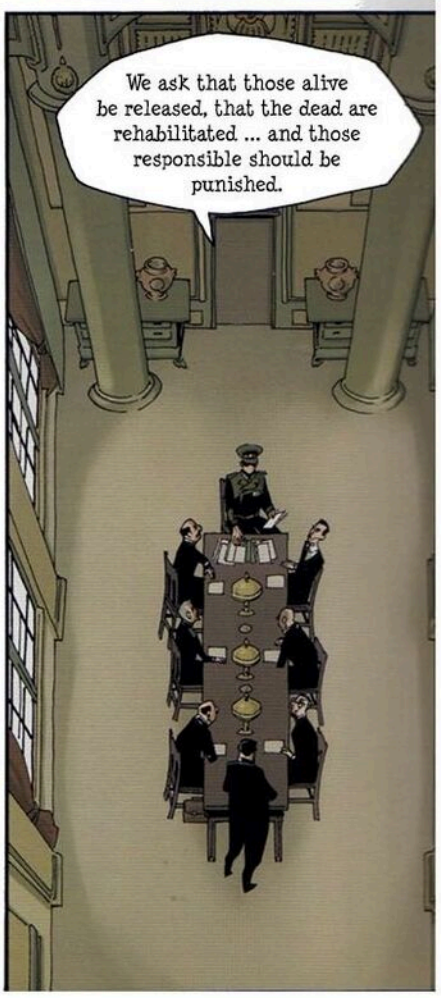
Is there something else that can be done to satisfy the army?
Yes, we want the head of General Vasily Dzhugashvili.
V ... Vasya? Stalin's son?
I have here an indictment against General Dzhugashvili, which lists his escapades, his misdeeds and crimes.

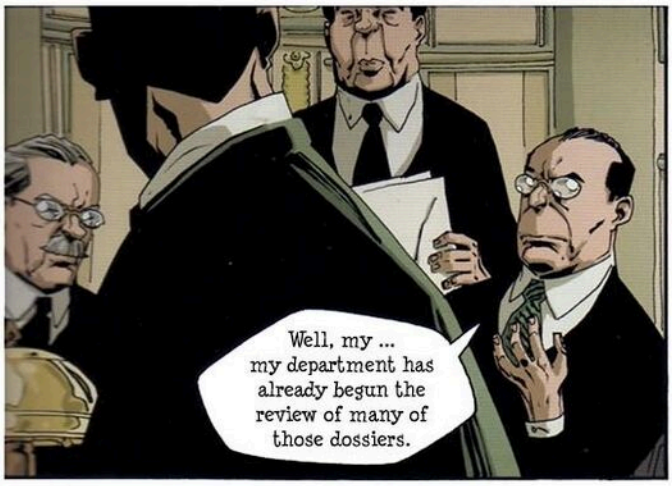

His crimes? Seriously?
We have, among other things, lists of all the brave officers who have been demoted, arrested or even killed, during his criminal operations.

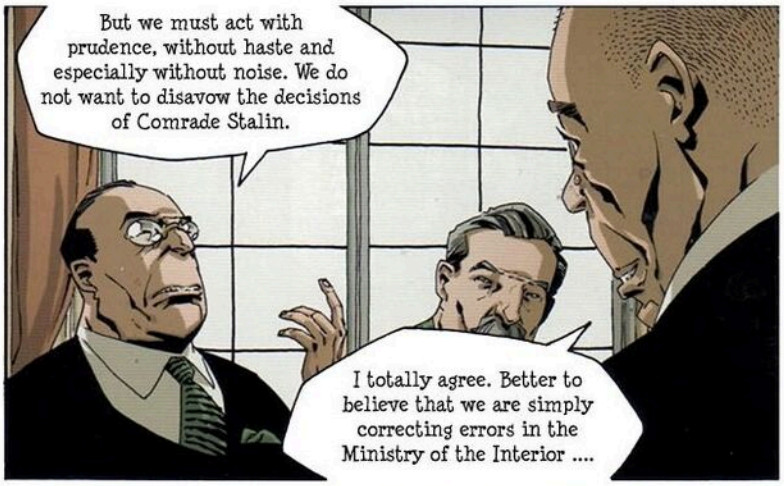
The mind boggles ...

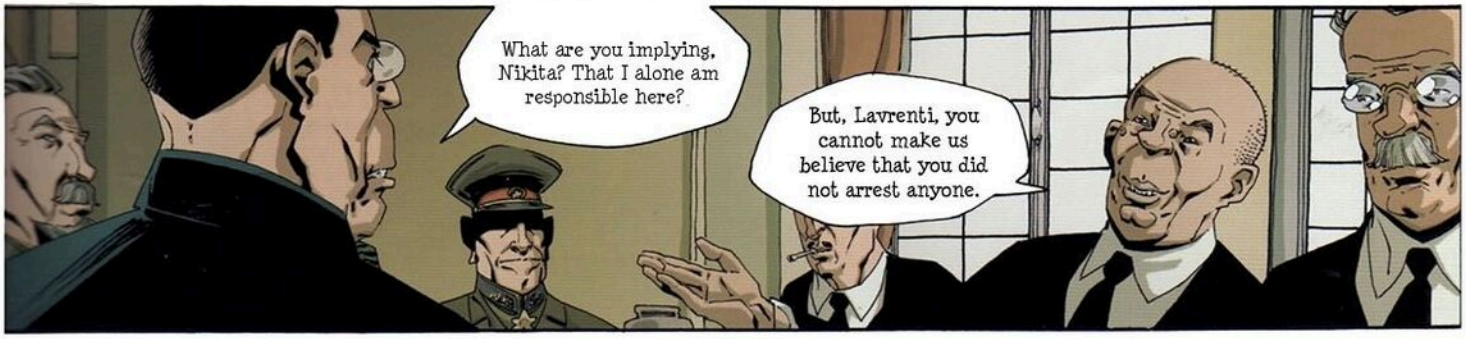
I understand the reluctance of Comrade Beria. His services have made the arrests and General Dzhugashvili is his godson.

However, can anyone here really say that these officers were not wrongly accused?


We ask that those alive be released, that the dead are rehabilitated ... and those responsible should be punished.


Well, my ... my department has already begun the review of many of those dossiers.


But we must act with prudence, without haste and especially without noise. We do not want to disavow the decisions of Comrade Stalin.
I totally agree. Better to believe that we are simply correcting errors in the Ministry of the Interior ....


What are you implying, Nikita? That I alone am responsible here?
But, Lavrenti, you cannot make us believe that you did not arrest anyone.

Very well!

I have something here to prove that no arrest stems from my own person. Each of these orders has been signed by Stalin himself ... and counter-signed by at least one of you.

Where did you get those files?

You stole them from Stalin!

I am ready to take all responsibility, but then everyone will do the same. Is this what you want?
Nikita, is this what you want?
Anastase? Viasseslav? Nikolai? Is this what you want?
You will not find my signature in these files.
This is not Stalingrad or Berlin!
This is Moscow. It is not the army that is in command here.
Comrades, if you please. This is not the time to tear ourselves apart. Stalin looks at us, from wherever he is.
The Marshal will agree that we cannot judge the son of Stalin before Stalin's funeral takes place!
I do not demand that he be judged in public!
We will not judge him at all.

We'll be reasonable and come to an arrangement ... I propose that the case of Vaissa ... well, the General Dzhugashvili, be studied at the next meeting of this committee.
I would like to correct an injustice. Comrade Khrushchev has no government responsibility, outside of his duties to the committee. This is certainly not what Stalin wanted ...
Oh well ....
You are perfectly right!
No-one has ever questioned the sincere and mutual affection Nikita has always had for our beloved Joseph Vissarionovich.
That is why I propose that Nikita Khrushchev be immediately put in charge of the funeral arrangements.
All those who are in favour of this proposal raise their hands.
Vote is unanimous.
Proposal is accepted.

THE DEATH OF
STALIN
CHAPTER 2 - THE FUNERAL

Alongside Lenin, Comrade Stalin created the powerful Communist Party, he was educated and hardened...
Alongside Lenin, Comrade Stalin inspired and guided the great October Revolution ...
Continuing the immortal work of Lenin, Comrade Stalin led our country to victory over fascism during the Second World War ...
Comrade Stalin armed the Party and the entire Soviet people ...
...the great and bright program of...

You must be Svetlana ...
... the daughter.
My name is Ioussi.
I am a friend of your brother.
Not me. I do not like uniforms.
All friends of Vasya wear a uniform.
You know my brother ... and what do you do in life?
I am a director.
Theatre or cinema?
Cinema.
That's why you're friends with Vasya. You present him with actresses.
Are you cold?
You want to go?
I want to walk.
Are you coming?

Ioussi!
No!
Ioussi, no!
Why?
Why did you do this to me?
You arrested Ioussi! You put the man I love in prison!
Why?
He was an imperialist agent.

What? But, no! How can you think ...
Look at you, girl. You're ugly and you have bad skin. He is a successful director ...
... why would he sleep with you?
He seduced you only get close to me. So he must be an imperialist agent.
I'll find someone else for you.
Drriiing
Svetlana Alliluiva Dzhugashvili?
That's me.
This is the Secretariat of the Central Committee. You are ordered to go to the Union House, to the room with columns, today at 5PM.
But ... I'm sick. I cannot ...
This is the order of the Central Committee.

Do not touch him!
Who are you?

Oh, forgive me! I am sorry, I did not recognise you.
It does not matter. I appreciate that I was given the opportunity to say goodbye to my father.
Well ... yes, of course ... if you want to follow me ...
A little more to the left. There ... perfect!
Remember. You symbolize the greatness of sorrow and pain.
DONG
Blunderers!
Get back to work! We are already late for rehearsal.

The rehearsal?
You are... repeating it?
Oh, no! Listen if everybody keeps on leaving their place, we will never get out ...
All this is an exercise? A re-enactment?
You are making me repeat ... my father's funeral?
Come on! You ...
Comedians! Circus dogs!
Stalin piss on you, band of clowns!
Maria! Maria Yudina!
Please, stop smiling, it's indecent!
Sorry. It's too funny.

The last tribute to our comrade Stalin must be made by the entire Soviet people ...
... special delegations formed by workers and collective farmers appointed by the local committees are invited to come to Moscow.
Name?

Nadia Marechka Alexandrovna. I have been a member of the party since '32.

And this is my son, Serguei. His father is in a grave at Stalingrad and I am taking him to pay tribute to Comrade Stalin.

They're all friends of Stalin?
More than friends. His children!

But what you doing, damn you, Nikita? You've forgotten? With all these delegations, we will have a million cretins who will arrive in Moscow!
How do you want me to maintain order in this mess?
You've never been taught to be wary of crowds? You know that this can lead to insurrection.
Previous directive concerning the funeral delegations is cancelled.
The only people allowed to enter Moscow are people with a special pass issued by the Central Committee.

Everybody out!

What's going on, Mum?
I do not know.

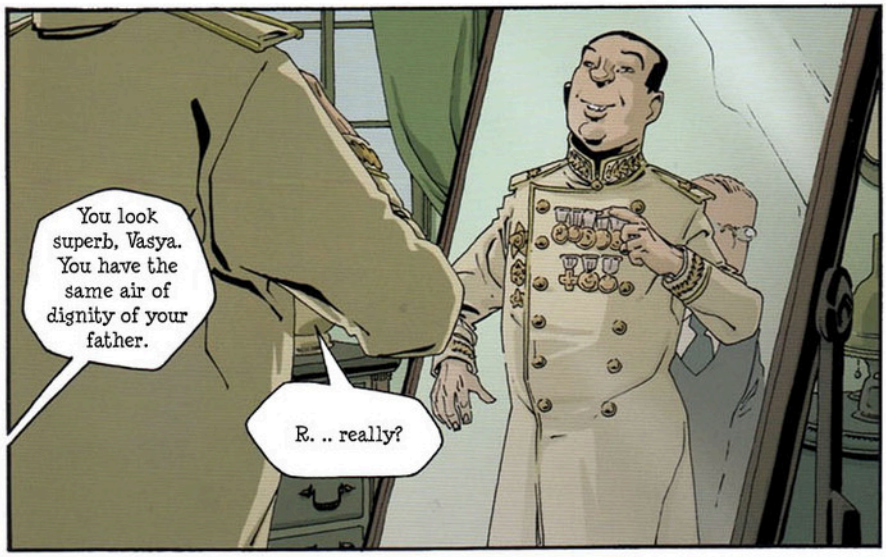
This is not fair.
We came a thousand miles to greet Stalin.

We're not gonna see him?

Khrushchev was completely overwhelmed. He is beginning to be ridiculous in front of everyone!

You know about Svetlana? She is hysterical. She threatens to kill herself if she is forced to attend the ceremonies.
There remains Vasya.

You want to Vasya on the front stage? The army will shoot him in the mouth.
He is the only son of Stalin still alive. It's got to be him, no?


You look superb, Vasya. You have the same air of dignity of your father.
R. .. really?

The world leaders will be at your side. Throughout the Soviet Union, all eyes will be upon you.

I promised you would behave well ...
Do not make me lie.

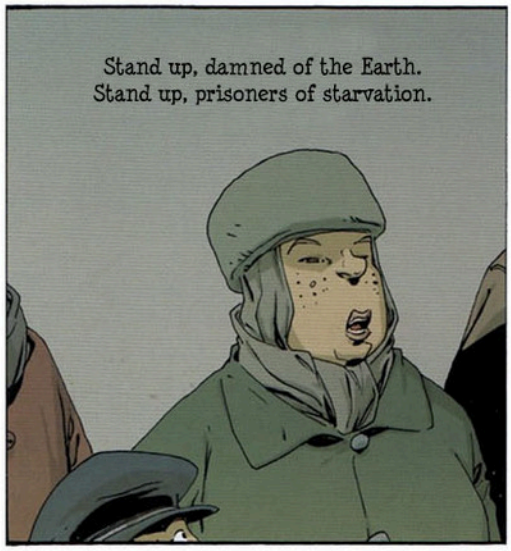
We are going on foot. You want to come?
Where to?
Gorky Street, everyone is gathering there. If we are numerous enough, they will not dare to bar the way.
Sergei ... Sergei ...
Come on.
We'll see Stalin.

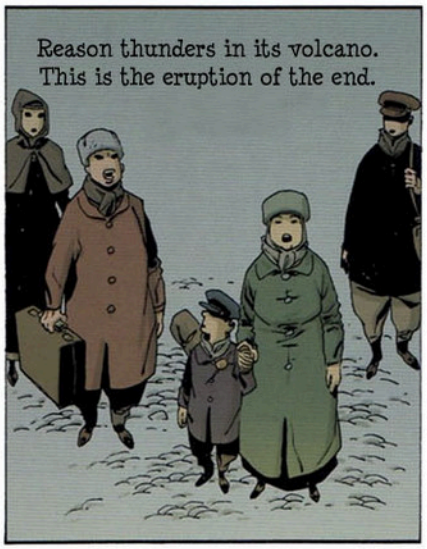
13
38
Oh, shit ...

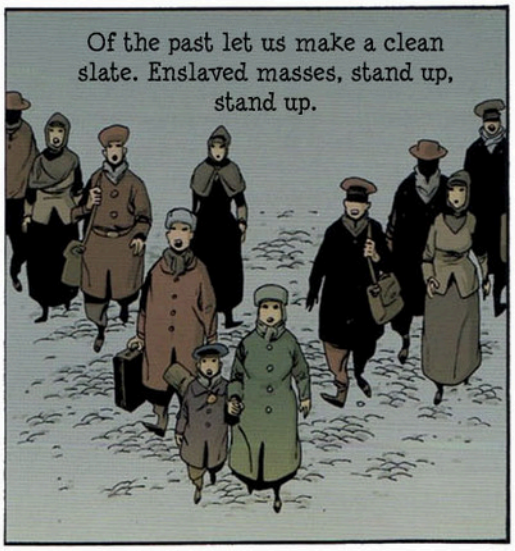
Disperse, all of you!
Disperse or we will open fire!

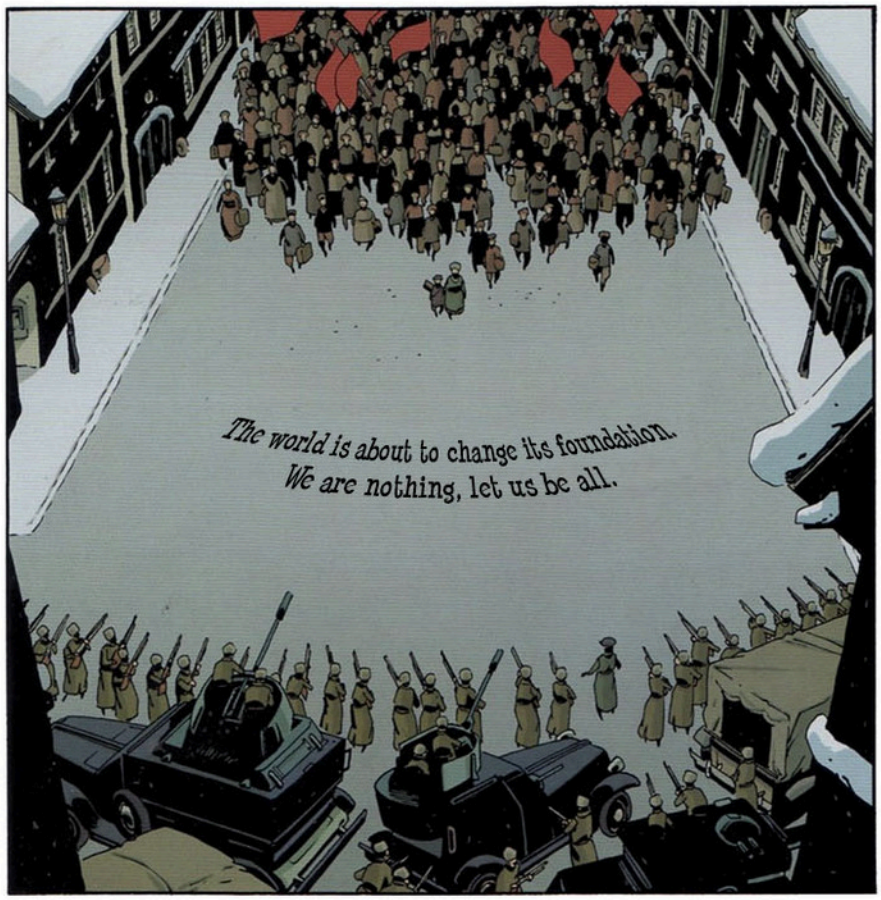
At my command ...
Fire!

Get ready to fire warning shots above their heads.


Stand up, damned of the Earth.
Stand up, prisoners of starvation.


Reason thunders in its volcano.
This is the eruption of the end.

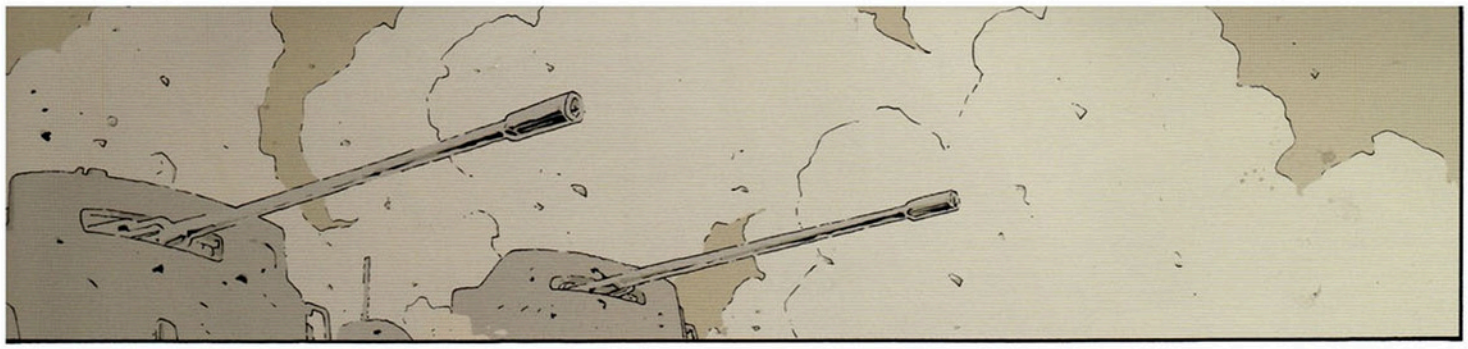

Of the past let us make a clean slate. Enslaved masses, stand up, stand up.


The world is about to change its foundation.
We are nothing, let us be all.

This is the final struggle.
Let us group together, and tomorrow . . .

The International will be the human race.
Fire!
Fire!

Sergueil
Mum!
C ... cease firing ...
Mom!
Cease firing!

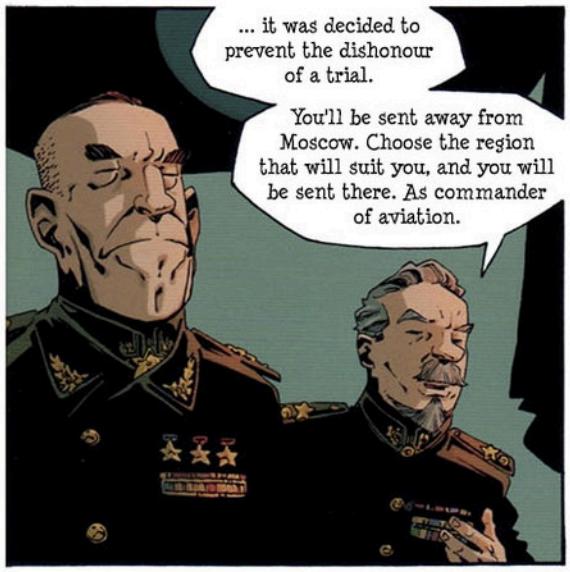


The Central Committee appointed to the Chair of the Council of Ministers ...
... as the new Secretary General of the Party ...
...the talented disciple of Lenin and faithful collaborator of Stalin:
ЛЕНИН СТАЛИН
Georgi Maximilianovitch Malenkov.
As our main resolution, the ideal that inspires all our hearts...
... is to continue the work and policies of Stalin!

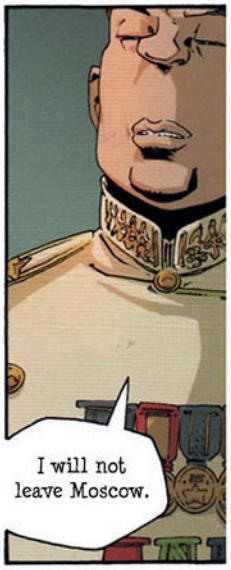
Premier Zhou Enlai wishes to convey to you the condolences of Comrade Mao.
To him, Stalin has always been an example.
Thank you.
Your father left us too young. In China, we believe that at 73 years, a man in the prime of life.
In the prime of life!
Of course. He died in the prime of life!
And for good reason!

I'll tell you a secret, Comrade Zhou. Between Communists, there should be no secrets.
My father did not die like that ...
He was killed.
Yes! The leader of the Soviet people!
The leader of the world proletariat! He was killed!
General, silence!
He bothered the imperialists and their lackeys!
Yes, they killed him!
Vasya, shut your mouth!
I am a witness. I saw the murderers!
They cannot get away with that!
I appeal to the people of the Soviet Union!
Murder! Stop them! They killed my father!
They killed my father!

General Dzhugashvili, following your outrageous actions, which were provocative and hostile, a complaint was filed against you ...
... you risk demotion and prison.
However, given the enormous grief that overwhelms you ...


... it was decided to prevent the dishonour of a trial.
You'll be sent away from Moscow. Choose the region that will suit you, and you will be sent there. As commander of aviation.

With no flight ban, of course.


I will not leave Moscow.

Are you a soldier?
You heard the order of the Minister of Defence. If you are a soldier, you will carry out the order.

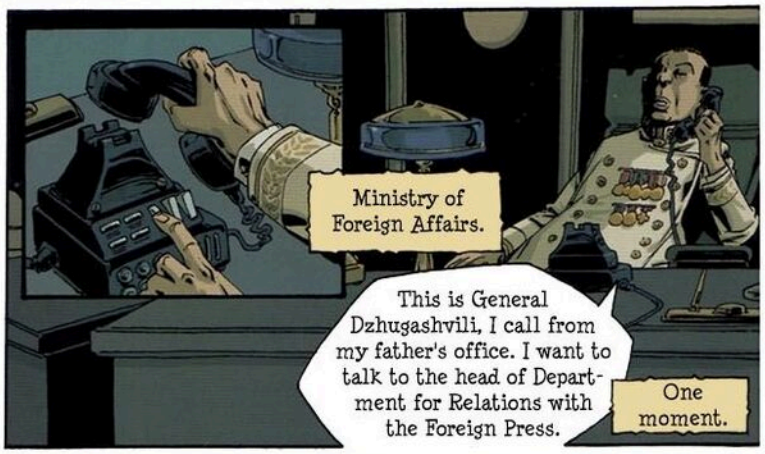
Vasya, I beg you ...
Marshal Zhukov wishes to be lenient with you.
I will not leave Moscow.

In that case ...
You're not a soldier.

Fuck you, Zhukov. I will not leave Moscow.

What the hell are you doing?
Well ... we were told to remove the furniture. This will be the museum.
The museum?

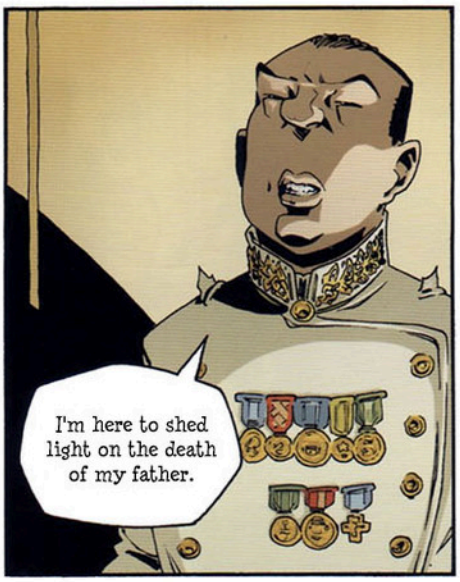
The future museum of Stalin.
Get out!


Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
This is General Dzhugashvili, I call from my father's office. I want to talk to the head of Department for Relations with the Foreign Press.
One moment.

Khourtinski, I'm listening.
This is General Dzhugashvili, I'm calling on behalf of the Government of the Soviet Union.
I want all the foreign correspondents in Moscow ...

...to be summoned for a special press conference at the Lux hotel. In one hour, exactly.

Hello. I do not know if you all know me. I am the son of Stalin.


I'm here to shed light on the death of my father.

In case you did not already know it, he was murdered!

Lux

My father, the great Stalin, was the victim of a conspiracy led by a group of renegade soldiers in the pay of capitalist interests.
The leader of this conspiracy is Marshal Zhukov.

I called you here because the influence of these traitors among the leadership of the Soviet Union...
Arrest that man!
There! That's what I was saying.
Take him away!
Order of the Ministry of Interior. We will record your identity and confiscate your equipment.
Whoever publishes one line about what just happened here will be expelled from the Soviet Union automatically... if he's lucky.
Whoever tries to hide a piece of paper or a sound recording or a photographic film, will be arrested for espionage.

Vasya is finished.
No longer can he avoid a trial.
We can still prevent him from being in one. For health reasons.
Good idea. We will stick him in a sanatorium. It is always better than the gulag.
You did everything you could for the boy.
What can I say? His father was made of steel. He is made of ... nothing!
Vodka ...
You are finished?
Let's speak a little with Khrushchev? He badly arranged the funeral.
He shot innocent civilians, we had no idea this would happen! I think we should exclude him from the committee for incompetence ...
Mmmmhh ... good idea.
And then I change my mind. He is where he is ... for now.
As you wish.
He is at his summit, Lavrenti Pavolvitch.
He has arrived.
As long as it lasts.

Here! You do not know the latest?
Stalin left two wills, well sealed. The first is written, "to be opened after my death." The second: "to open in a crisis."
After the death of Stalin, the Committee opened the first. It says: "Tell the people that I am responsible for all the evils, Stalin."
This is what we will do. With the people remaining discontented. Disturbances break out. A crisis occurs ...
So the committee will open the second. It is written: "And now, you have to like me! Stalin."
Doesn't it make you laugh?
It makes me.
The guy who told it received five years.
Stalin liked my jokes.

Georgi?

Nikita?
You're going home?

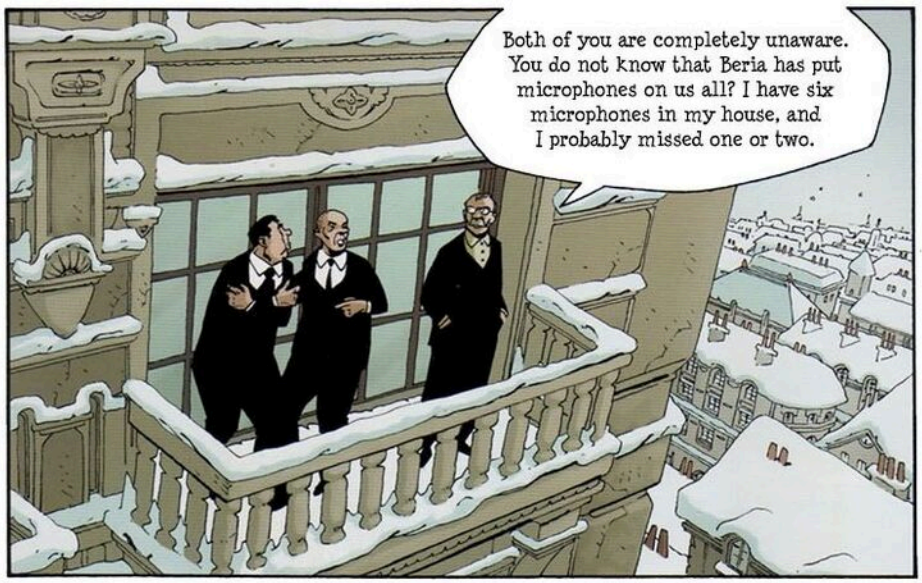
Hey ... yes.
My dacha is in your path. Will you give me a lift?

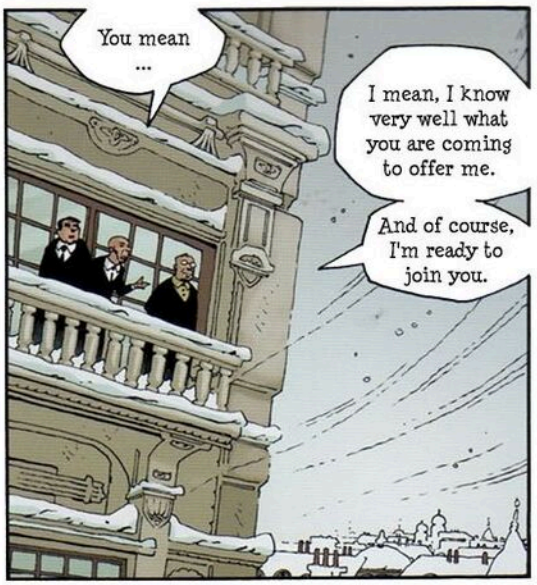
I had lunch with Lavrenti Pavlovich. He told me his latest joke.
The will of Stalin? He says that to everyone.

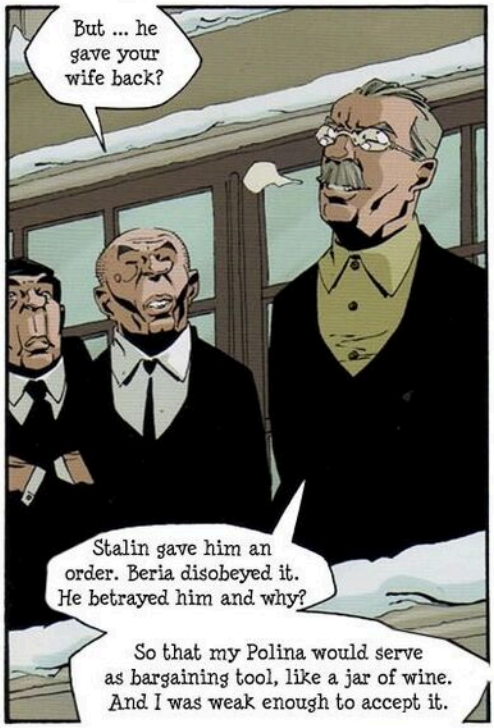
Oust Beria?
I should have you arrested just for speaking like that.
We cannot be satisfied with ousting him. He has a million men at his orders. And the entire Kremlin guard. We must find a solution that is... more radical.

R ... radical? You want to kill him?
Me? No. But, Beria ... you know. Have you ever thought about how long it will be before he gets tired of you?

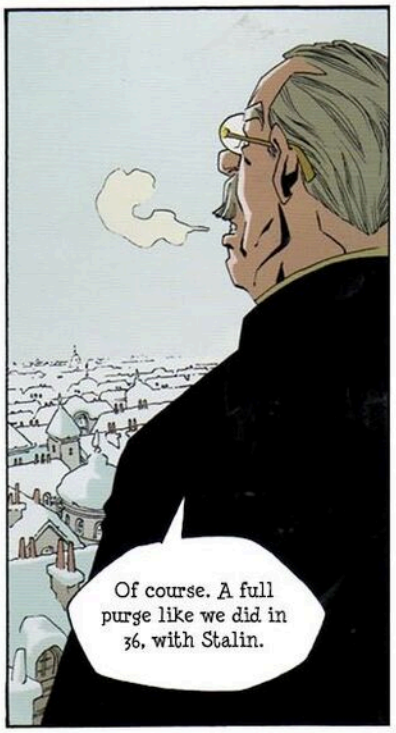
We all need to be in on it.
Bulganin and Kaganovitch are with me, if you're with us, Mikoyan follow. The only one missing is ...
... Molotov.
Do not talk too loud. Polina sleeps. She is ill, you know ....
Beria has given her back to me.
Every day I spend with her, it is due to him, a great man, I owe him.
Why did you come to see me?
Well ... that is to say ...
We ... we wanted to bring the news, that's all ...


Both of you are completely unaware. You do not know that Beria has put microphones on us all? I have six microphones in my house, and I probably missed one or two.


You mean ...
I mean, I know very well what you are coming to offer me.
And of course, I'm ready to join you.


But ... he gave your wife back?
Stalin gave him an order. Beria disobeyed it. He betrayed him and why?
So that my Polina would serve as bargaining tool, like a jar of wine. And I was weak enough to accept it.

Well, it is not just Beria we have to worry about. We must also eliminate all the executives of the Ministry of Interior and the NKVD. All his loyalists.
Do you want ...?
All of a sudden?


Of course. A full purge like we did in 36, with Stalin.

We need ....
... the army.
That's impossible.
Zhukov will accept it. He hates Beria.

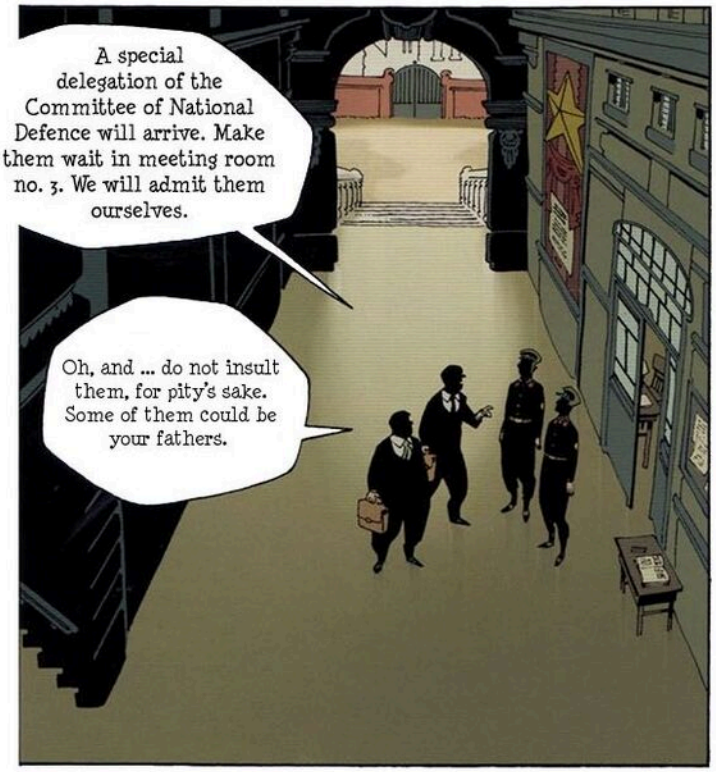
If Zhukov is with us, we can prepare our lists. We will carefully wait for months if necessary ...

A very long list, do not forget anyone.

How can you live when you're the son of God?
We miss your father.
You bet ... you were all afraid of him. Me too, it was my mother who was not afraid.
I did not know that.
She said, "your father will do you no harm. He knows that I will kill him if he tries."
And she held his head. I heard screaming, both of them, sometimes I saw my father in the morning with scratches all over his face.
And then one night, I heard even stronger cries than usual. And beatings. And a shot.
The night she killed herself?
Oh, yes ... she committed suicide.

I found her lying on the floor of their room. She had no face.
And do you know where the gun was? In his hand, on him.
He had picked it up afterwards ...
How can you live, when you're the son of God?
Give him a drink.

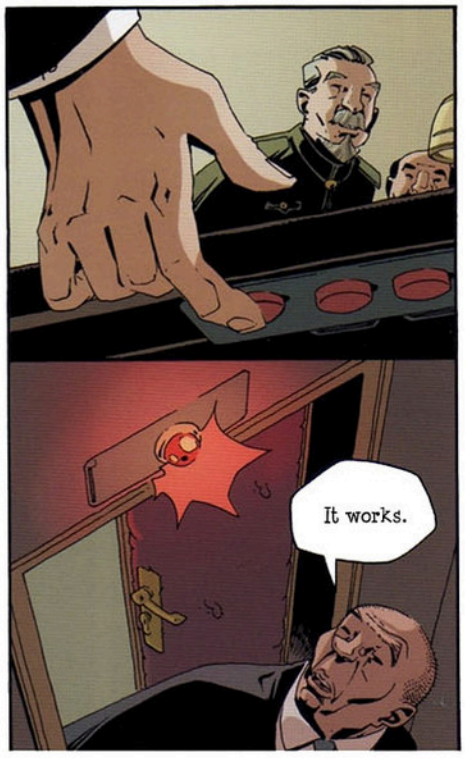
Three months later.


A special delegation of the Committee of National Defence will arrive. Make them wait in meeting room no. 3. We will admit them ourselves.
Oh, and ... do not insult them, for pity's sake. Some of them could be your fathers.

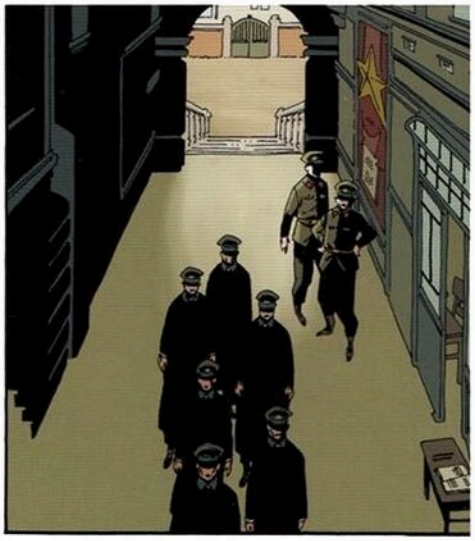
But the instructions?
Among them is Marshal Zhukov. He does not like to feel belittled.

Signal.

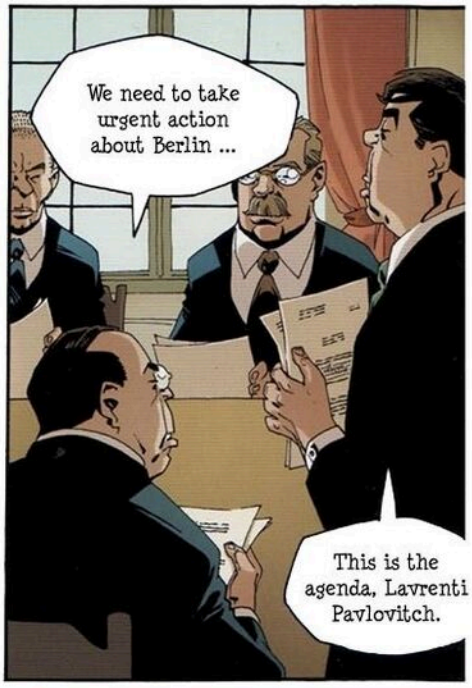
Did you check if it works?

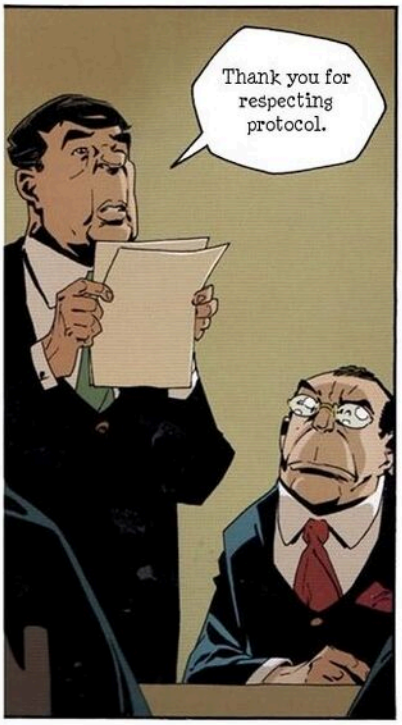

It works.

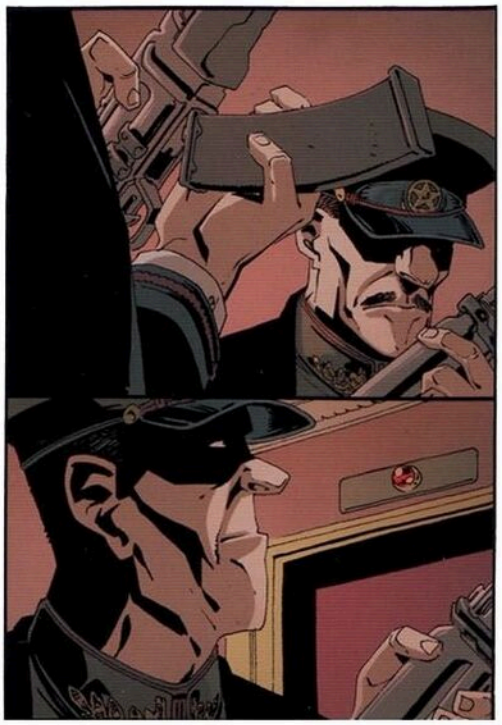
Hello, friends.



We ... we can begin.


We need to take urgent action about Berlin ...
This is the agenda, Lavrenti Pavlovitch.


Thank you for respecting protocol.



Above all, we must examine the situation within the party. That's why ... eh ...
Comrade Secretary General is right. We need to examine together, among real communists, the current situation and chart new paths towards the victory of socialism ...
... that's why, comrades, I suggest that first of all we address the case of Comrade Beria.
What's wrong with you, Nikita?
I accuse Comrade Beria of betraying the Soviet Union on behalf of capitalist interests and to satisfy his own lust for power.
I ...
I ask to speak before you!
It's my turn.

And ... the best proof is that all the previous accusers of Lavrenti Beria have disappeared without a trace!
Can I speak now?
The ... er ... Comrade Mikoyan asks to speak.
Well, I .... I'm sure this Bolshevik criticism, frank and friendly, will help Comrade Beria see his mistakes and learn from them.
And I am sure that this will help us in the future, in our collective leadership ...
So ... I suggest we move on to the second point of the agenda.
Thank you, Mikoyan.
Do I finally have the right to speak, dear Secretary General?
Georgi!
Georgi! The signal!

Hands up!

I ... uh ... as ...
Drop your hands, Georgi.
Hmm ... as the President of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union, I order you to arrest Lavrenti Beria and submit him to the relevant judicial authorities.

GUAAAARDS!!!

Shout again.
If you please.

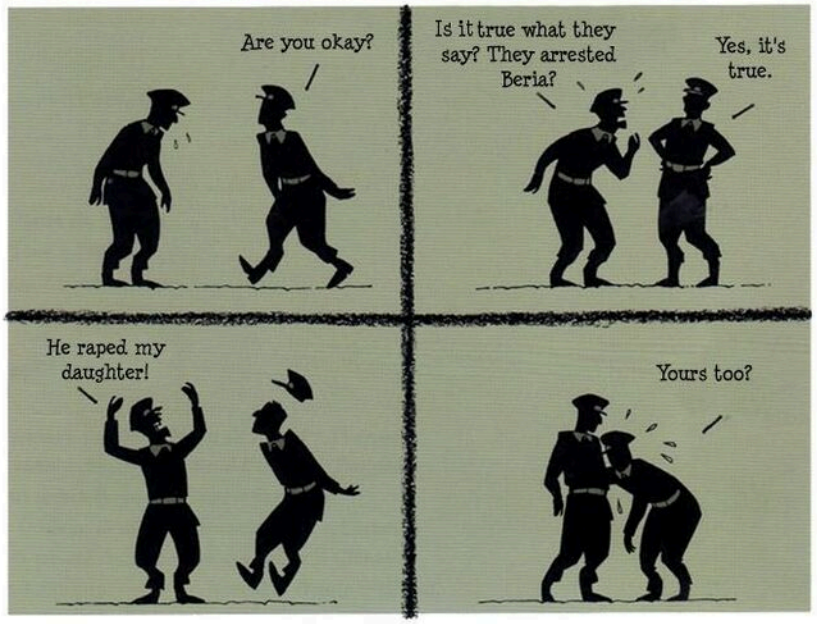
I always knew this day would come.
I have given a lot of thought, especially to the last few years, when Stalin was planning to put me away ...
I myself have sealed the fate of those who have preceded me. I cannot fool myself.
I know that tomorrow, it will be published in the Pravda, this rag that has so often sung my praises, a long prepared statement. It will announce that the just judgement of the People's Court has been applied ...
... and that the tyrant, murderer, criminal, spy, imperialist agent ... in short, all the calamities of our beautiful world ... Lavrenti Pavlovich Beria has been executed.

Is it that our people are so blind?
Is it that our party is so powerful?
Is it that only our children can imagine the truth?
Сталин обучил Коммунистическую партию чтобы указать дорогу Советскому народу
Staline a éduqué le Parti Communiste pour guider le Peuple Soviétique.
Do they really think that I, Beria, I was strong enough ...
... to liquidate hundreds of thousands of people without help?

Do they believe that the brave comrades who saw me today are pure and innocent?
Ah, yes!
They believe this!
Their hands are awash in my blood ...
And now ...
They are ready to turn a new page ...

Hey! You do not know the latest?

You and your jokes. You're going to get us arrested, Maria.
Wait, this one is good. It happens the day after the arrest of Beria, at the mausoleum.
There is an NKVD officer crying and when one of his colleagues comes to see him...


Are you okay?
Is it true what they say? They arrested Beria?
Yes, it's true.
He raped my daughter!
Yours too?

... to a bright future.

The last tribute to our comrade Stalin must be made by the entire Soviet people. Special delegations formed by workers and collective farmers appointed by the local committees have been invited to come to Moscow.

Excerpt from official discourse - 9 March 1953.

The previous directive concerning funeral delegations is cancelled. The only people allowed to enter Moscow are people with a special pass, issued by the Central Committee.

Excerpt from official discourse - March 10, 1953.